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## One is not Born but Becomes a Person: The Importance of Philosophical Mothering

Jennifer Whiting

Since this essay is partly about the importance, or lack thereof, of origins, let me begin by saying something about its origin. It was conceived in 2001, for the first in a series of sessions organized by the American Philosophical Association to honor various philosophical “foremothers”. The honoree was Annette Baier, who had been my colleague at the University of Pittsburgh for the last ten of her twenty-four years there, before she retired in 1997 to her native New Zealand. And I was pleased to accept the APA invitation because I regard Annette as my philosophical foremother in the strong sense in which I regard my own mother as my mother: each is in an important sense – albeit contingently – my one and only. I call attention to this contingency here because the importance of contingency figures prominently in what follows.

As usual with forefathers, I must speak of my philosophical ones in the plural: but when it comes to philosophical foremothers, Annette is it. Not only was I not in my formative years given the works of women philosophers to read; there was also only one woman philosopher, each junior, at my graduate and undergraduate institutions, and there were no women in the department at Harvard when I started teaching there. So when I moved from there to Pittsburgh, Annette became the first senior woman to play a formative role in my philosophical development. And she did this – like my own mother – not simply by being there, but by the care and support she offered and by the example she set. I mention this not just to explain the origin of my essay, but to introduce one of its central themes – namely, motherhood and the various forms of it.

My second, and related, theme is personhood and the various forms of it. For personhood is a central theme in Baier’s own work. It was the focus of her 1990 Presidential Address to the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association, entitled “A Naturalist View of Persons”.<sup>1</sup> This view, according to which we persons are first and foremost *animals*, is best understood in terms of its opposition to what might be called “supernaturalist” views. Baier opposes a venerable tradition, stretching at least as far back as Plato, according to which the sort of rationality characteristic of persons is a kind of transcendent or quasi-divine faculty that sets persons apart from other animals.<sup>2</sup> In Baier’s view, which is indebted to both Hume and Wittgenstein, reason is a highly evolved form of animal intelligence whose evolution was itself facilitated by the evolution of various social conventions and norms, especially those involved in the use

of language. This view has long been a part of Baier's mental landscape, and I have put in section [A] of the appendix some passages from the early essays collected in *Postures of the Mind*, so that you can see some early formulations of it. I have also put in [B] a passage from her book on Hume, so that you can see the ways in which she takes this view to be Humean. But I want to focus here on the more recent Presidential Address, quoted in section [C] of the appendix. Here Baier seems to add something new – namely, an emphasis on mothers and their distinctive role in the genesis of persons. This leads her to challenge prominent philosophical accounts of personhood according to which persons have mothers only accidentally, if at all. Baier's discussion of personhood has two primary targets.

First come those in the Kantian tradition, who give pride of place to the rationality and dignity of persons. Here Baier quotes Daniel Dennett, who says: "One's dignity does not depend on one's parentage, even to the extent of being born of woman, or born at all."<sup>3</sup> Baier objects largely to the *content* of such views: she thinks, very roughly, that their accounts of *what* a person is are skewed by their emphasis – and in some cases their exclusive focus— on the sort of dignity and rationality that philosophers have traditionally associated with mature (and often male) members of the human kind. Baier takes this emphasis to obscure various forms of dependency that are essential to the lives of embodied persons, especially the asymmetrical dependencies of infancy and infirmity, the sort of dependencies that make trust (and anti-trust) far more important than moral theories (especially Kantian and contractarian theories) have traditionally allowed. This is clear from the passages in [C] to which I shall return.

Baier also objects to what she sees as the narrow and excessively intellectualist conception of rationality associated with Kantian views. As she explains elsewhere, Kantians tend to see it as the "main operation" of reason (or intellect) "to formulate completely universal laws or rules, which can be non-problematically applied to give predictions, practical guidance, and practical criticism in particular cases".<sup>4</sup> Baier herself has a much more expansive conception of reason, as evidenced in [A1] and [A2], where she speaks of "reason" as "a product of animal intelligence plus culture-facilitated self-consciousness" and associates reason with acting, not necessarily uncritically, in accordance with various customs. In her view, reason is associated with a wide range of norms, many of them highly culturally specific. And she sees this as an aspect of the naturalistic view of persons. In sum, her naturalism is opposed both to the individualism and to the intellectualism that she associates with Kantian views.

Baier's second targets are those in the Lockean tradition, who tend to distinguish persons from the human animals with which they typically coincide and to countenance the possibility (either logical or conceptual) of persons

who come to be as a result of various non-natural processes such as the brain-transplants, fissions, and the Star Trek style “teletransportations” imagined by Derek Parfit, Sydney Shoemaker and other neo-Lockeans – myself I confess included. I’ll explain these so-called “thought experiments” in the second half of this essay, where I’ll focus on Baier’s objections to the *methods* of neo-Lockean philosophers, as distinct from the content of their views. But I should explain here why I use the language of *confession*: Baier has no patience for such thought-experiments, which she views primarily as “male fantasies” that women philosophers tend to find “strange”. “It is unlikely”, Baier says towards the end of [C6], “that women can pretend that new persons come to be in any other way than by being born of women.” And she continues, presumably thinking of women like me, as follows:

Now of course many women philosophers do participate in the neo-Lockean metaphysical thought experiments, just as there are women Kantians and there have always been eager women adherents of patriarchal religions. Women’s reputation for docility is not entirely unearned, and often it has been our best survival strategy.

Here, Baier appends a note saying, “I myself meekly did the philosophy that men had initially instructed me to do, and rewarded me for doing, until I safely had tenure.”

But I – speaking now in *propria persona* – have safely had tenure for a long time. And I do not think that I am – or ever have been – all that docile. So I wonder: what, aside from the fact that Shoemaker and Parfit figure prominently among my philosophical forefathers, explains my willingness to participate in neo-Lockean thought experiments? Might I be less willing to participate in such thought-experiments if I paid greater attention to what Aretha Franklin would call “natural womanhood”?

I mention Aretha because of the way in which Judith Butler has used her song to question the idea of “natural womanhood”, womanhood being, in Butler’s view, “a cultural position”.<sup>5</sup> For what I want to do in the first part of this essay is to call attention to the *cultural* shaping of phenomena that Baier seems to regard as in some sense *natural*. Hence my title: “One is Not Born but Becomes a *Person*”.

This title – borrowed of course from Simone de Beauvoir’s famous claim that “one is not born but becomes a *woman*” – is meant to express both a point that Baier accepts and a point on which I disagree with her.<sup>6</sup> The point she accepts is expressed in “Cartesian Persons”. See, for example, [A4] and [A5], from which I quote briefly here:

A person, perhaps, is best seen as one who was long enough dependent upon other persons to acquire the essential arts of personhood. Persons are essentially *second* persons . . . heirs to other persons who formed and cared for them, and their personality is revealed both in their relations to others and in their response to their own recognized genesis. . .

Being conscious is not enough to make one a person. For that we need Cartesian consciousness, consciousness of ourselves and our place in the world, not merely consciousness of the relevant stimuli to what is in fact self-maintenance in that world . . . Through participation in discourse, through being addressed and learning to address [i.e., through using second-person forms of address], the child moves from consciousness to self-consciousness, and full Cartesian consciousness.

But this point tends to be eclipsed in Baier's Presidential Address, where she stresses that "new persons can [not] come to be in any other way than by being born of women". So the point of disagreement expressed in my title can be put by saying that it is human *animals*, not *persons*, that are "born of women": whether or not these human animals become persons depends on precisely the sort of social interactions and cultural processes that Baier herself tends to emphasize.<sup>7</sup> There is thus a tension in Baier's naturalism between her emphasis on biological facts and her explicitly Humean emphasis on the importance of contingent cultural practices. The tension is most evident in the way in which she represents nature sometimes as *distinct* from culture (as in [A1]), sometimes as *involving* culture (as in [C1]-[C3]).

One might wonder here whether what we see is really a tension, rather than a kind of development, in Baier's views – a development from what might be called "first naturalism", with a naïve focus on our biological inheritance, to a more sophisticated "second naturalism" that sees the evolution of (for example) language and other social norms as part of our natural endowment. But the trouble with this "developmental" reading is that the emphasis on cultural factors is dominant in Baier's early work, where she speaks explicitly of the way in which a creature with the capacity of judgment characteristic of persons needs to be able to "blend [its] second nature, as a trained rule-respecter, with [its] original nature as an intelligent animal".<sup>8</sup> Moreover, it is in her later work that biological or "first natural" facts – especially those associated with women's distinctive role in reproduction – come to the fore.

It is of course possible that Baier herself sees this as reflecting a true development in her thought. But that seems to me difficult, and not just because I see moves in this direction as regressive. The main problem is that

second-natural facts figure no less prominently in Baier's later work than in her earlier work: what we find is simply a sudden, and in my view somewhat anomalous, emphasis on women's distinctive role in reproduction. So I see a tension. And I want to recommend that Baier resolve this tension by adopting a more thorough-going "second naturalism" – one that acknowledges the important role played by contingent cultural practices in shaping our – "first natural" endowments while continuing at the same time to aim for the sort of reflective distance from our practices that allows us to weed out those we are better off without.<sup>9</sup> For Baier seems to me to make two mistakes: first, she sometimes treats second-natural phenomena as if they were first-natural and so less open to change than they may ultimately be; and second, her explicitly Humean emphasis on the importance of second-natural facts sometimes leads her to be more sanguine about particular second-natural practices than I think she *should* be.

I should perhaps note here that Baier herself might not be all that worried about my charge of tension and might well resist my attempt to push her towards a more consistent second-naturalism. For Baier is a self-confessed "anti-theorist", who says that "no anti-theorist is a consistent anti-theorist, for only theorists give first priority to consistency".<sup>10</sup> She aims instead at the sort of "fidelity to complex facts" she claims she learned from J.L. Austin.<sup>11</sup> But still, the desire to be faithful to complex facts is no excuse for failure of imagination. And Baier's deference to what she takes to be natural facts, including some second-natural facts, seems to me to lead to some curious – and in her case I think uncharacteristic – failures of imagination.

I suspect that Baier herself would be more distressed by this charge than by any charge of tension or inconsistency, for she clearly includes exercises of imagination among exercises of reason and she seems at times to value them over the narrowly deductive exercises associated with the narrow conception of reason to which she is opposed. Consider, for example, her praise of Shaftesbury, whom she takes to have included the full range of our mental capacities in his conception of reasoning, and so to have rejected what he (anticipating contemporary feminists) called the methods of "Gladitorial Pen-men". As Baier says in her Carus Lectures:

Since [Shaftesbury] valued all sorts of reflection, and reflective conversations, including those that were witty, irreverent, and miscellaneous in their topics and logical structure, Shaftesbury's "reason" comes to include all of this. No particular priority is given to arguments that force a conclusion on us, nor even to reflections that arrive without any coercion at some conclusion, over those that are more tentative and raise interesting questions. . . . Descartes's preferred unity, the imprint of one



thinker's logical mind, is replaced by a delight in variety, miscellany, crooked mental streets, and entertaining byways. The art of the agreeable diversion becomes an exercise of reason.<sup>12</sup>

So now for an agreeable diversion that will allow me both to explain where I think Baier goes wrong and to shed some light on the point of my sub-title: let me relate an incident that came to mind when I was reading Baier's book on Hume, and found her referring to a passage where Hume notes that people often wonder why, in spite of the fact that mothers are often more illustrious and more virtuous, children are called by their fathers' rather than their mothers' names.<sup>13</sup> A friend of mine once asked my niece Charlotte, who was then about four, why *her* name was 'Goodman' when her *mother's* name was 'Whiting'. After some serious reflection, Charlotte, who is quite a serious thinker, replied matter-of-factly, "that's the deal". I later learned that my sister Emily has three answers for questions from her children that she either cannot or will not at a particular stage answer. They are: "that's the deal", "get over it" and "get a life".

This brings me to the point of my sub-title: I cannot imagine anyone better from whom to learn the arts of personhood than my sister Emily, who engages in what I call "philosophical" mothering, not of a narrow intellectualist sort but of a broad Humean, even Wittgensteinian, sort: she knows more or less when and where justification must come to an end, at least for the time being, and communicates this lovingly but effectively to her children. The point here is that little Charlotte's reflection enabled her to produce what was in some sense obviously the right answer: "Get a life" would have been entirely inappropriate, and not simply because she was talking to a "grown-up". Charlotte had clearly mastered her mother's language-game.

This example calls attention to some of the dangers of the sort of appeal to social customs in which little Charlotte, like Hume himself, engaged. What Hume says about the question is that in the society of marriage men have the advantage over women, so that the imagination passes more easily in familial contexts to the father than to the mother, which itself strengthens the child's relation to the father, as a result of which "children commonly bear their father's name, and are esteem'd to be of nobler or baser birth, according to his family".<sup>14</sup> This seems about as satisfactory as saying "that's the deal", which cuts rather more quickly to the chase. And the problem with this answer is that it may not encourage sufficient questioning of the hands we are dealt. Moreover it seems to me that there are places in Baier's work where her appreciation of the need for *some* customs and traditions from which to start prevents her, sometimes in the guise of naturalism, from questioning things she *should* question.

One remarkable example appears in Baier's essay "Caring about "Caring".



Baier speaks here as if the only way to rescue what she calls “homosexual love” from what she sees as its *natural* asymmetrical dependence on “heterosexual love” is to resort to technological means, such as artificial insemination, that she seems to think undesirable.

The homosexual love, even when it dares speak its name . . . cannot see itself as a means of its own continuation beyond one lifetime. Even if the wholehearted Lesbian who adopts a child, or bears a child by artificial insemination, wants that child also to be homosexual, she depends normally on nonhomosexuals for the continuation of the homosexual community. Homosexual love, however imitable and contagious, is not a love which is fertile when it comes to perpetuating itself across generations. Should this matter? Are we not all dependent on the fact of diversity for the preservation and continuation of whatever sort of caring we do value? Do we not all need others not to be like us as well as needing some others to be like minded? Yes certainly, but a diversity of loyalties and styles of loving may be more problematic than a diversity of tastes in food, or in career preferences . . .

Why, one may ask, should we not will a pluralistic world in which homosexual loves flourish, but are dependent on heterosexual loves in a way the latter need not depend on the homosexual loves? . . . Of course [homosexual loves] need not so depend – if the human community became like a farm in which all reproduction was by artificial insemination, then no one couple’s or group’s ongoing sexual preferences need depend on others having other preferences. Why do most of us not will such a version of a technologically feasible ongoing human community? I leave this question unanswered.<sup>15</sup>

This is a remarkable passage, especially coming from a feminist who is known both for her imagination and for her attention to *actual* facts, both natural and social. First, there is the implicit equation of ‘love’ with ‘reproductive sex’, which is ‘catholic’ in one sense but not in another: everyone knows that you can have love without reproductive sex and vice versa.<sup>16</sup> Second, there is Baier’s tendency to privilege sexual over other sorts of preference in determining who is asymmetrical dependent on whom. Actually, she privileges a very specific sort of sexual preference, excluding even heterosexuals who strongly prefer oral to other forms of sex. For they seem to be no less asymmetrical dependent for their continuation on those who prefer good old-fashioned

reproductive sex than Baier takes homosexuals to be. Why, we might ask, is Baier not more worried about *their* vulnerability? Finally, there is Baier's curious and uncharacteristic lack not only of imagination but also of attention to actual facts. It should be *obvious* that gays and lesbians need not resort to artificial insemination in order to reproduce. In a world in which artificial insemination was impossible and same-sex adoption was prohibited, gays and lesbians who wanted to have their own children would very likely – as my sister Emily would no doubt recommend – “get used to it” and start having reproductive sex with *each other*.<sup>17</sup>

Given that this sometimes happens even in the *actual* world, it is curious that Baier fails to consider this possibility as an alternative to the technological solutions she seems to find so unpalatable. Perhaps it is because she thinks that the homosexually inclined are so heterosexually challenged that they are likely to regard reproductive sex as even *less* palatable than artificial insemination. But this explanation is weak given well-known “second-natural” facts – such as the number of men who, perhaps succumbing to what Adrienne Rich calls “compulsory heterosexuality”, marry and father children in spite of having always regarded themselves as gay.<sup>18</sup> I focus here on men because being heterosexually challenged is likely to prove a greater obstacle for them (than for women) to engaging in good old-fashioned reproductive sex.

When a philosopher as intelligent and as highly imaginative as Baier overlooks the *possibility* of something that *actually* happens, we need to sit up and pay attention. What explains this blindspot? Perhaps the problem is that Baier has – or at least attributes to homosexuals – what she would consider a “moral prejudice” in favor of keeping sex tied to romantic love, and so thinks that homosexuals would find the thought of sex without romantic love so objectionable that they could not bring themselves to engage in it even for the purpose of reproduction.<sup>19</sup> But the widespread prevalence of sex without romantic love renders this potential explanation weak.

I suspect that part of the problem here is Baier's conception of what naturalism requires, or at least recommends. She seems to regard a person's sexual orientation largely as a matter of his or her nature, and she seems to have a moral prejudice in favor of what might be called “natural” reproduction, by which I mean not only non-technologically assisted conception, but also conception involving partners who are both “naturally” attracted to one another and “lovers” in the romantic sense: she seems to think that it would in some sense be a *good* thing if same-sex unions *were* fertile, so that reproductive sex could be a “natural” expression of their partners' love for one another in the way that it seems to be for at least some heterosexuals. But this association of the idea of romantic love with that of reproduction – while not a pure coincidence – is arguably a culturally contingent phenomenon, and one that is not obviously required by naturalism. For there are societies that have managed to reproduce themselves

in spite of lacking this association of ideas.

One example is provided by the Baining people, whom I introduce here to show how the same “first-natural” facts can take on different values in different cultural systems, and can do so in a way that seems to me entirely compatible with Baier’s “naturalism”. I rely here on the account given by the Cornell anthropologist Jane Fajans, in her book *They Make Themselves: Work and Play among the Baining of Papua New Guinea* (University of Chicago Press, 1997). Fajans’ title refers to the way in which the Baining, among whom there is very little of what we would call ‘play’, seem to view the raising of children in the same way they view other forms of agricultural practice – namely, as a matter of converting raw materials into socially useful products: just as they clear forests and plant gardens, and (perhaps more to the point) domesticate pigs, so too they take human infants, who play in the mud like mere animals, and “make” them into the sort of socially useful animals who can in turn form and then feed *their* dependents, both young and old.

There is not the same sort of presumption among the Baining as we find among many peoples that the dependent creatures for whom one *should* care are primarily one’s own *biological* children and (in cases where age or illness renders them dependent) one’s own *biological* parents. Adoption, even in cases where the biological parents are alive and well and continue to have a relationship with their biological child, is widespread. And one common way in which adoption occurs is for a person or couple who takes a liking to an infant to start bringing gifts of food for it, thus establishing between it and the infant the sort of carer/caree relationship that seems required for the infant’s survival given the prolonged dependence characteristic of human infancy. I mention this so as to call attention to the fact that what we find here is one among other possible cultural responses to first natural-facts, a response that I find attractive insofar as it privileges actual relations of care over mere blood (or genetic) ties. For the tendency to privilege blood (or genetic) ties leads to well-known sorts of racial and ethnocentric bias.<sup>20</sup>

But to return to the Baining, the biological parents are expected to yield the child to what we might call its “social” parents, and they typically do so without resentment, often adopting other children for themselves and raising them alongside any other biological children they happen to have. Moreover, when couples have both adopted and their own biological children, they tend to favor their adopted children, often referring to them as their “true” children, the ones who will (for example) best care for them in their old age, presumably because of what might be called the “gratuitous” care they originally provided for these children.

Fajans interprets these (and other) Baining practices as expressions of the Baining tendency to privilege voluntary social relations, which they see as distinctively human, over the sort of instinctive and merely biological relations

that belong to us simply in virtue of our animal nature. And she connects this with the Baining tendency to experience shame in connection with the more “animal” sort of behaviors in which they engage, including both sexual intercourse and the sort of play characteristic of children. Marriage is associated by them with the work of tending gardens and feeding one’s dependents, and is initially resisted by young adults, for whom it seems to have few if any romantic associations. In fact, they often run away before they eventually “get over it” and return to settle down, typically with a partner of their parents’ choosing. Here, however, we should note that the Baining attitudes towards the more “animal” aspects of human existence do *not* seem to be expressions of the sort of rationalist or intellectualist prejudice to which Baier objects: this is a down-to-earth society organized around subsistence farming and the preparation of food.

Still, I can imagine Baier objecting that naturalism would oppose *any* tendency to view the more animal behaviors in which persons engage as shameful – though this might require her to admit that naturalism is opposed to many of our own (and others’) culturally shaped attitudes in sexual matters. But I do not think that naturalism as such is necessarily opposed to a society’s cultivating *some* such attitudes. Moreover, one need only read the work of contemporary socio-biologists to see the risks involved in putting too much weight on first-natural facts.

Reticence about sexual matters is one thing, but reticence about play – except perhaps foreplay – is another. And I imagine that Baier would be far more distressed by the Bainings’ attitudes towards play than by their attitudes towards sex. For she views play as one of the delightful “animal” activities in which persons engage, and she explicitly criticizes what she sees as the excessively intellectualist accounts of personhood given by Lockean and Kantian philosophers, who privilege the allegedly more “dignified” capacities of human animals over other equally human capacities, such as the capacities to tease and play. But she tends in such contexts not to complain about these philosophers’ neglect of the human proclivity for various forms of non-reproductive sexual activity. See, for example, passage [C4], from which I quote a bit here:

And now we have got to that vital Kantian conceptual link between personhood and dignity. To be a person is not to be born of woman, nor indeed to be born at all, but to spring forth from some fertile noumenal field of Ares fully formed and upright. Some philosophers who, like Locke and Kant, distinguish our personhood from our living human presence, are willing to say quite straightforwardly that infants, who so obviously are lively and do have parents, and whose dignity is not immediately obvious, are not yet persons. “Person” is

always a status term: by these philosophers it is reserved for those at least trying out a dignified gait or mien. It is not our ability to tease or play (an ability which infants display better than most adults), but our upright stature, our would-be commanding presence, our pretensions to importance, that are decreed by the founding and sustaining members of the fraternity of persons to be the qualifications for membership. Persons, especially if they are men, matter, and they decree who and what matters. “We are beings to whom things matter,” they self-importantly proclaim.<sup>21</sup> Aristotle, who of course did fairly straightforwardly profess the belief that persons had accidental mothers and essential fathers, launched a still flourishing tradition of finding moral significance in our upright posture (ours, that is, after infancy and before the decrepitude of old age). We are the descendants of *homo erectus*, we are told by our wise men the anthropologists. (Could it be that men have a thing about uprightness?).<sup>22</sup>

So much, then, for Baier’s rationalist (especially Kantian) targets and the substance of their views. I want to turn in the rest of this essay to Baier’s attack on the *methods* of neo-Lockean philosophers. But let me note in passing how effective, as forms of reason, Baier’s wit and irreverence can sometimes be.

It might help if I began by describing Locke’s original thought-experiment and some of the neo-Lockean variations on it to which Baier objects. Locke of course distinguished persons from the human animals with which they typically coincide. A person is “a thinking intelligent Being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider it self as it self, the same thinking thing in different times and places”. But many human animals (including not only those with severe brain damage but even normal infants) do not satisfy this condition, which we might call the ‘self-consciousness condition’.<sup>23</sup> With this distinction in hand, Locke argues (in two stages) that the identity of a person over time consists in the continuity of such consciousness. Locke is thinking primarily of memory here, but not (I think) only of memory: he is thinking of everything required for the sort of *responsible agency* that we take to be characteristic of persons.<sup>24</sup> In the first stage, Locke asks his readers to imagine that “the Soul of a Prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the Prince’s past Life, [should] enter and inform the Body of a Cocker as soon deserted by his own Soul”. Locke suggests that in this case “every one would see” that the resulting subject – the one with the Cocker’s body and the Prince’s soul and consciousness – was the *same Person* as the Prince, accountable only for the Prince’s Actions. His idea here is that continuing to have the same body is not necessary for continuing to be the same *person*.



Locke then runs a parallel argument suggesting that sameness of immaterial soul is no more necessary for continuity of consciousness than sameness of material body is. He thus rejects, on similar grounds, both the Aristotelian identification of a person with her animal body and the Cartesian identification of a person with her immaterial soul. On his view, a person's identity over time *consists in* continuity of consciousness, *whatever* substances contribute to its production – whether they are one or many, and whether they are material or immaterial.

Neo-Lockeans tend to be materialists who view the brain as the seat of psychological continuity in much the same way that Locke's contemporaries were inclined to view immaterial souls as the seats and bearers of psychological continuity. So neo-Lockeans tend to substitute talk of brains for Locke's talk of souls.<sup>25</sup> This has led to two important sorts of variation on Locke's original thought-experiment. There are many variations, but I shall to focus on what I call more rather than less "naturalistic" variations, by which I mean variations that involve something as close as possible to the "normal" cause of psychological continuity – namely, continuity of a human brain or of some significant part of it. For the use of such variations seems to me less vulnerable to some of Baier's objections than does the use of further-fetched variations, such as the Star-Trek-type case exploited by Derek Parfit (who is one of Baier's explicit targets).

The first sort of more "naturalistic" variation asks us to imagine what might be called a "brain transplant". An early example appeared in Sydney Shoemaker's *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*, published in 1963. Shoemaker later, in a passage where he is discussing Locke's original thought-experiment, summarizes his original variation on it as follows:

For those who are skeptical about 'souls', it may help to imagine a case in which what are switched are not souls but brains. Suppose, then, that by a surgical blunder (of rather staggering proportions!) Brown's brain gets into Robinson's head. When the resulting person, call him 'Brownson', regains consciousness, he claims to be Brown, and exhibits detailed knowledge of Brown's past life, always reporting Brown's deeds and experiences in the first person. It is hard to resist the conclusion that we, viewing the case from the outside, ought to accept Brownson's claim to be Brown, precisely on the basis of the evidence that he remembers Brown's life from the inside. This gives *prima facie* support to the Lockean view that personal identity consists in part in facts having to do with memory.<sup>26</sup>



The second important sort of variation – the sort I have used in my own work – asks us to imagine a person undergoing a kind of “fission”. There are many means by which such fission might be imagined to occur, but I want to imagine a case which is more (rather than less) naturalistic in the sense that the means involved remain as close as possible to actual facts about human brains and how they work. The most important such fact, which is known to us in part from experiments involving split-brain subjects, is the way in which each of the cerebral hemispheres in a human brain duplicates or can duplicate what goes on in the other.<sup>27</sup> This leads to the sort of case Parfit asks us to imagine in [E1] – a case in which *each* of a person’s cerebral hemispheres, carrying with it consciousness of the person’s past life, might be transplanted into a separate body (perhaps a body exactly like the body into which the other hemisphere is transplanted). In this case, we are to imagine *two* resulting subjects *each* of whom stands in exactly the same relations, especially relations of psychological continuity, to the original subject. We can call the one with the left hemisphere ‘Lefty’ and the one with the right hemisphere ‘Righty’. In this case, there is no basis for identifying one rather than the other with the original subject. And given the transitivity of identity, we cannot identify *both* with the original subject without also identifying them with each other: we must thus conclude that *neither* Righty *nor* Lefty is *strictly identical* to the original subject, though each is psychologically continuous with her.

Neo-Lockeans like Parfit, Shoemaker and myself have taken this sort of thought-experiment to show two things: first, that psychological continuity is not sufficient for personal identity and that we need to add a non-branching clause to get anything like a sufficient condition; and second (and in my view more importantly) that identity is not (as Parfit puts it) “what matters” in personal survival. Parfit’s idea is roughly that the original person surely *survives* fission, even though neither of the fission products is strictly identical with her. I agree and have argued that that the original person would be justified in having for each of her fission products something like the sort of special concern each of us ordinarily has (as things stand in the actual world) for her own one and only future self. In my view, the special sort of concern each of us ordinarily has for our own (as distinct from other) future selves no more presupposes their identity with us than our special concern for our friends presupposes *their* identity with us: special concern can be justified by *other* sorts of relations, in this case by psychological continuity even where it is not non-branching. But I cannot discuss that here.<sup>28</sup>

The point here is that these more “naturalistic” variations differ significantly from the sorts of thought-experiments that Baier picks on. To see this, consider Derek Parfit’s “Combined Spectrum” argument in passage [E2], which is the thought-experiment to which Baier refers at the start” of [C6], where she argues

as follows:

Paradoxically, it is the very will to identify oneself as a lasting remembering self that prompts these generation-forgetting and death-transcending modern whimsies, if not of doing without parents, at least of switching one's own for Garbo's, if not of being immortal, at least of becoming a potentially endless series of successive "selves".<sup>29</sup> It is Locke's memory criterion . . . that is thought to license these ignorings of actual biological origins, actual pasts there to be recalled, and to encourage these fantasized transfigurations, as persons wander freely across the gene pool, from memory to memory and from gender to gender.<sup>30</sup> For strictly, on Locke's criterion, a person is one who was born only if he remembers being born, was dependent on others only if he remembers the dependency. The autonomous adolescent person, if he has succeeded in forgetting that he was a heteronomous child, can rightly disown that childhood as his.<sup>31</sup> These fantasies of freedom from our own actual history, actual dependency, actual mortality, actual biological limitations and determinate possibilities, have on the whole been male fantasies, and many women philosophers have found them strange. Susan Wolf sensibly says: "my reasons for being interested in persons never had much to do with my beliefs about their metaphysical composition." Accepting a metaphysical "reduction" of persons into a sequence of conscious experiences or doings need not, she claims, in any way alter our conception of more-central-than-metaphysical aspects of persons as we view them and as we are concerned with them. On a generous construal, we might see these male fantasies as the Y chromosome trying to disown itself. It is unlikely that women, who have traditionally been allocated the care of very dependent young and old persons, will take persons as anything except interdependent persons.<sup>32</sup> It is just as unlikely that women can pretend that new persons come into being in any other way than by being born of women, after a conception for which two persons are jointly responsible, in all cases except those resulting from rape or from the seduction of the non-culpably ignorant.<sup>33</sup>

One might suppose here that a man who stands by his woman while she endures the pains of labor would find it more difficult to forget this than does a woman like myself who has never even witnessed let alone given birth.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps this is my problem. But the important question here is whether even a woman

who has given birth *should* refuse to engage in the sort of thought experiments in which neo-Lockeans invite us to engage. And the answer seems to depend largely on what the point of such experiments is supposed to be.<sup>35</sup>

If, as Parfit and I think, part of the point is to reflect on “what matters” to us, perhaps with a view to changing our attitudes in ways that seem on reflection more *desirable*, then it is not clear that we should be troubled by the fact that these experiments run contrary to natural fact. For it is not clear what status natural facts *should* have in our reflections on “what matters” or on how we *ought* to conduct our lives. This, in fact, is one of Hume’s most famous points: that one cannot derive an ‘ought’ from an ‘is’.

I wonder, for example, what attitudes (if any) Baier thinks naturalism would require or recommend if Parfit were to go out and get himself a good old-fashioned sex-change and then, after radical cosmetic surgery designed to make him look as much like Garbo as possible, to start dressing and acting like Garbo. Is this the sort of behavior for which Baier thinks her naturalism might provide a preventative cure? If so, how is Baier’s naturalism supposed to differ from Parfit’s own commitment to a secular and scientific world view? Is it just that Parfit is more open than Baier seems to be to technological modifications of our first natural endowments? If so, then shouldn’t Baier be more opposed than she seems to be to the benefits of medical technology? And shouldn’t she, given her own emphasis on the *natural* contours of an animal’s life, be more opposed than she claims to be to circumventing the more severe infirmities of age by means of suicide? Or perhaps to using medical technologies in ways that prolong life until such suicide comes to seem called for? How, if at all, is Baier’s naturalism supposed to help us draw the line between those technological modifications of first-nature that are acceptable from those that are not?

Suppose, for example, that Baier regards the desire for one’s own genetic child as many people regard it – namely, as a “natural” desire. Would she think its naturalness supports hiring a surrogate to carry my genetic fetus to term in a case where my ovaries are still functioning but I have no uterus? Or would what is arguably the unnaturalness of carrying another woman’s fetus to term tell against our allowing any such social practice? Or would carrying another woman’s genetic child to term serve to *make* what is sometimes called the ‘gestational’ surrogate *into* the child’s *natural* mother? This *actual* (though technologically facilitated) possibility of dividing the labor of gestation from that of contributing genetic material raises the question: what, if anything, is a “natural” mother? If a “natural” mother is primarily one who contributes genetic material and/or gives birth, then it seems that an infant might – without any violation of the laws of nature— have at least two “natural” mothers. If on the other hand mothering consists largely in giving the sort of primary care and help with socialization that converts a raw human animal into a person, then perhaps there is no such thing as a “natural” mother. For it is not just adoptive

mothers who can do this: anyone – even a man – can in principle do it.<sup>36</sup>

Now that I have problematized the notion of a “natural mother”, I want to return to the case of the sex-changed Parfit, whom I shall call ‘Garbit’. What, if anything, would Baier say naturalism requires or recommends concerning how we should treat Garbit? Should we treat Garbit simply as a man whose fantasies have put him so completely out of touch with reality that he needs psychiatric treatment? Or should we treat Garbit like a so-called “natural woman”, with the emphasis (following Butler) on ‘like’ and all the while reminding ourselves that there is really no such thing as a “natural woman”? Or should we treat Garbit as a woman, albeit an artificial one, perhaps like the “artificial persons” whose possibility Baier seems to countenance in passage [A4]? I am skeptical that naturalism, taken simply as the expression of a secular and scientific world-view, provides any answers to such questions.

Similarly, if new persons were to come to be in some of the ways Parfit asks us to imagine, I am skeptical that naturalism, simply as such, would prescribe any particular attitudes towards them on their own or others’ parts. I suspect (for example) that the *products* of split-brain fission would as a matter of *brute fact* tend to think it worth carrying on with most of the projects of the persons whose cerebral hemispheres they inherited, though they might have difficulty with certain sorts of projects, such as those involving a particular sort of body or commitments to marriages in which their partners did not themselves undergo such fission. Moreover, I suspect that *others* would eventually “*get over it*”, viewing it as cruel or at least “politically incorrect” to proceed in any other way than by modifying social institutions and attitudes so as to accommodate the needs and interests of subjects who so resembled “natural” persons as to be indistinguishable from them to anyone (themselves included) who did not know the facts about their “origins”. We might initially have a term, analogous to ‘bastard’, to designate such “artificial” persons; but this term would, I suspect, eventually lose its social significance in something like the way in which ‘bastard’ has. This may of course take a long time, and may require anti-discrimination laws and such. But *first*-naturalism would not help us here: it would be *moral* arguments or appeals to *second*-natural attitudes and practices that would lead the way. And we might in the end pride ourselves on our ability to step back from our initial prejudice in favor of those psychological subjects, interpretable by us, that resemble us in being “born of woman”. Discriminating against similar subjects who are not “born of woman” might eventually be regarded as no more acceptable than discriminating against similar subjects whose skin color differs from one’s own.

Baier repeatedly claims that ‘person’ is a “status term” and I agree: but she seems to think that we are “stuck with it” in a way that I do not. See for example [C7], which seems to me to contain a bit too much Humean “that’s the dealism”. Societies *have* managed – even if only with great difficulty – to

dispense with status terms such as ‘peasant’ and ‘noble’. So if we thought our lives would be better if we “killed” the word ‘person’, we could attempt to do that. But I cannot dwell on this point. I want to make two quick points before returning to the question how the products of neo-Lockean thought experiments *should* regard *themselves*.

First, it seems to me that willingness to engage in the sort of thought-experiments involved in imagining brain and split-brain transplants is not necessarily incompatible with the sort of anti-intellectualism that Baier takes to be part of her naturalism. A neo-Lockean can include all sorts of characteristics, and not simply narrowly intellectual ones, among the personality traits that must be preserved if we are to say that a person existing at one time is psychologically continuous with a person existing at some earlier time. He might for example regard the persistence of a person’s scientific knowledge as *less* central to *her* persistence than is the persistence of her sense of humor. Locke himself – though commentators rarely note this – frequently mentions facts about a person’s *concerns*, especially her concern for the subjects whose experiences she seems to remember and to anticipate. So I doubt that Locke would regard detached and purely intellectual memory or anticipation, even “from the inside”, as sufficient for the sort of psychological continuity and accountability that he associates with personhood. And even if Locke’s *actual* views were objectionably intellectualist, it is in principle possible for *us* to develop the basic Lockean view in less intellectualist ways, in ways that emphasize (for example) the affective dimensions of psychological continuity.

Baier will no doubt object that what she calls ‘personality’ is not so easily separable from the body in which it evolves as the brain transplant examples suggest, and that once neo-Lockeans include *less* intellectual characteristics among those involved in the sort of psychological continuity they take to be necessary for the persistence of a person they run the risk of having to admit that the relevant sort of continuity may in fact depend on the persistence of the personality in the body – or at least the *sort* of body – in which it originally evolved. For Baier will no doubt claim that personality is typically constrained and partly shaped by the bodily conditions in which it evolves. Here, however, Baier needs to be careful, lest she find herself having to admit that the extreme changes involved in paralysis or radical disfigurement spell the end of the *person’s* – as distinct from the *animal’s* – persistence.<sup>37</sup>

My second point is parallel to the first: it is that willingness to engage in the sort of thought-experiments involved in imagining split-brain transplants is *not necessarily* incompatible with the sort of anti-individualism that Baier takes to be part of her naturalism. Assume for the sake of argument that Baier is right to suppose that even apparently *individual* intentions and actions depend on *social* contexts. These points would not be threatened by the existence of someone like Shoemaker’s imagined Brownson, who has what was originally



Brown's brain and what was originally Robinson's body.

Note in connection with my first point that Brownson's sense of who he is may depend largely on his *affective* states: whose wife and children he *loves*, whose job he finds *fulfilling*, and so on: there is nothing especially intellectualist about supposing that Brownson is Brown because he *loves* Brown's wife and children, finds Brown's job *fulfilling*, and so on. Note also Brownson's dependence on *others* here, including his emotional vulnerability to Mrs. Brown should she reject him – or refuse to trust him with Mrs. Robinson – simply because he has Robinson's body.

Note now, in connection with my second point, that if Brownson's brain had *not* had the sort of *embodied socialization* that it originally received in Brown's body, Brownson's brain would presumably be incapable of sustaining the sorts of memories, intentions, beliefs and other psychological states that we are supposed to imagine it now sustaining in Robinson's body. And if Brownson suddenly found himself in an environment in which others refused to take his actions and utterances at face value – refused in other words to recognize him as the person he takes himself to be – he would perhaps lose his sense of himself as that person. So if, as Baier suggests, his sense of himself is largely a function of *second* person relations – largely, that is, a function of the attitudes of those with whom he interacts – then his sense of himself will be dependent not simply on his upbringing but also on the ways in which others *continue* to interact with him.

I want to conclude by attending briefly to the sort of attitudes that subjects of neo-Lockean thought experiments should have towards *themselves*, both in anticipating the changes they are supposed in some sense to undergo and in reacting to the changes they have in some sense undergone.<sup>38</sup> Consider first a case involving anticipation, taken from John Perry's dialogue.<sup>39</sup> A philosophy professor who accepts a *bodily* criterion of personal identity is in an accident that leaves her brain alive and well, though the rest of her body is about to expire. She is given the opportunity to have her brain transplanted into the body of another accident victim whose body is in good shape but whose brain has just expired. The professor resists on the ground that the product, since it will lack her *body*, will not be *her*. But her student, who accepts a psychological continuity theory, pleads with her to take advantage of the opportunity. His argument, however, depends on the assumption that *she herself* will survive in the product. Perhaps, though, her student should have taken a different tack. Instead of arguing that *she herself* will survive, he might appeal to her *present values* to instill in her at least instrumental concern for the existence and persistence of the product, who will be psychologically continuous with her even if it is not strictly identical with her. He might ask who would be more likely and better able than the product to care for her children (whom we may suppose to be without a practicing father) or for her aging parents



(whom we may suppose to have no other children and to be less likely than her own children to find a good “adoptive” home).<sup>40</sup> The emphasis here is on social relations, not individual identity, and the argument is one that should move men, at least qua father and sons, as well as it moves women.

Moreover, we can imagine the philosopher eventually changing her mind and accepting the offer, in which case we can perhaps imagine the product having rather different views about what constitutes a person’s identity (or at least survival) over time. The product, finding itself embedded in the social relations in which our philosopher had been embedded, might eventually come to regard herself as having undergone a mere body transplant. She might thus become a neo-Lockean who recalls having once subscribed – mistakenly she now thinks – to a bodily continuity theory. Or she might simply cease to *care* about the problem of personal identity as traditionally conceived – that is, as a metaphysical problem about identity in the “strict numerical sense”.

Ceasing to care about this problem as traditionally conceived would perhaps be more likely in the case of subjects who reflected retroactively on the fissions by means of which *they* came to be. I have argued elsewhere that the products of the “naturalistic” sort of fission involved in split-brain transplants would very likely continue *in fact* to have – and would *not* be *unjustified* in continuing to have – many of the beliefs, attitudes, and projects they have inherited from their predecessors.<sup>41</sup> There will be special problems about first-person beliefs and attitudes, and certain sorts of projects, such as commitment to a monogamous marriage. But suppose that I were to undergo split-brain fission, and that each of the products loved the members of my family in the way that I do, especially my sister Emily. For she would be there telling them all to “get used to it”, telling my parents, siblings and children – perhaps even my husband – that they should feel *lucky* to be loved by two Jennifers, instead of just one.

I have dealt elsewhere the special problems posed by my husband, though I should note here that some of these problems stem from our participation in the contingent cultural institution of monogamous marriage in which people can always, even in the actual world, cease to participate. The problems posed by my parents, siblings, and children are a piece of cake compared to that: for they in fact have and love – or could actually have and love – multiple children, siblings, and parents. My children could even in the actual world have multiple *mothers*. Suppose, for example, that their father and I split up when they are very young, but retain joint custody, each proceeding to share our lives with different women, who come to play for these children the social roles indistinguishable from the social roles he and I continue to play for them: these children might describe themselves as having one Dad and three Moms. So my children could perhaps “get over” having something like two of me.

But what about my fission-products themselves? Suppose that they, having

descended from someone who spent so many years studying philosophy, sat around worried about the problem of personal identity as traditionally conceived. Suppose they said things like, “Of course I *feel* just as if I were her; but strictly speaking that was *her*, and this is *me*. It was *she* who formed all those beliefs and attitudes which I find myself tempted to express. So why should I carry on with those beliefs and attitudes? Those are *her* friends and family; so why should I love them, even if they do love me?” Here, Emily might point out to my fission product that, although my mother did not give birth to *it*, there is an important sense in which my mother (together with my father) *was* largely responsible for its personhood: if they had not cared for her predecessor throughout the predecessor’s prolonged infancy, and if they had not initiated her predecessor into the arts of personhood, *she* would not be the *person* she is. And if my fission-product kept on asking “but who exactly is that?”, I suspect that Emily would eventually be moved to reply, in good Humean fashion, “Get a life”.<sup>42</sup>

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### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Printed in *The Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 65 (1991), 5-17; reprinted in the paperback edition of Baier’s *Moral Prejudices* (Harvard University Press, 1995). I might note here that Baier was one of only a handful of women to have been elected President in the first hundred years of the APA, and that her theme was inspired by that of her distinguished predecessor Mary Whiton Calkins, whose 1918 Address was entitled “A Personalistic Conception of Nature”.

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted to Christopher Williams for this characterization of Baier’s naturalism in terms of its opposition to supernaturalism. See his Introduction to *Persons and Passions: Essays in Honor of Annette Baier*, edited by J. Jenkins, J. Whiting, and C. Williams (University of Notre Dame Press, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> Baier quotes from Daniel Dennett’s “Conditions of Personhood,” printed in A. Rorty ed., *The Identities of Persons* (University of California Press, 1976). The passage in which she does so appears as [C4] in my appendix. I have included these passages in an appendix so as to help orient readers who are not familiar with the work of Baier or that of her neo-Lockean targets.

<sup>4</sup> From the Preface to Baier’s *Postures of the Mind* (University of Minnesota Press, 1985) p. x.

<sup>5</sup> Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination", in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, edited by H. Ablove, M. A. Barale and D. M. Halperin (Routledge: 1993) pp. 307-320. The reference to Aretha Franklin is on p. 317.

<sup>6</sup> Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, translated by H. M. Parshley (Vintage Books, 1974), p. 301. For those using other editions (the original French edition having been first published in 1949) this is the first sentence of Part IV.

<sup>7</sup> Even the claim that human animals are born of woman is not quite right: for insofar as being a woman is occupying a certain cultural position and one can give birth to human offspring without occupying that cultural position, human offspring need not be – and some perhaps are not in fact – born of woman. For more on this point, see Monique Wittig, *The Straight Mind and Other Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> From "Mind and Change of Mind"; p. 63 in *Postures of the Mind*.

<sup>9</sup> For my thoughts on this issue, I am much indebted to John McDowell. See especially his "Two Sorts of Naturalism", in "*Virtues and Reasons: Philippa Foot and Moral Theory*," edited by R. Hursthouse, G. Lawrence, and W. Quinn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) 149-179; reprinted in McDowell's *Mind, Value, and Reality* (Harvard University Press, 1998).

<sup>10</sup> See "Poisoning the Wells," p. 285 of *Postures of the Mind*.

<sup>11</sup> See the Preface to *Postures of the Mind*, p. xi.

<sup>12</sup> From the Paul Carus Lectures, delivered in December of 1995 and published as *The Commons of the Mind* (Open Court Press, 1997) p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Annette Baier, *A Progress of Sentiments: Reflections on Hume's Treatise* (Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 139.

<sup>14</sup> From Book II, Part I, section IX of David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, originally published in London, in 1739.

<sup>15</sup> From pp. 97-98 of "Caring about Caring" in *Postures of the Mind*.

<sup>16</sup> I know, of course, that Baier knows this. But given that she *of course* knows this, what I find interesting is the sense in which she tends nevertheless implicitly to equate love with reproductive sex. And I find this interesting

partly because of what I take myself to have learned from Baier: to attend in reading a philosopher's work not simply to its letter but also to its spirit (i.e., to attend to the motivations that are not always given explicit expression). Baier's point, which she has now clarified in conversation, is that love involves the desire to procreate – i.e., to produce a reflection of oneself and one's beloved. And Baier cites the views of Diotima (in Plato's *Symposium*) in support of this point. But Baier needs to be careful here, since Diotima tends to regard procreation as an inferior form of the sort of creation to which she takes love to aspire, the noblest sort of love aspiring not to merely mortal products but to immortal ones like great works of art. Moreover there are additional reasons for caution given the ways in which such views, in treating the offspring as ultimately a reflection or extension of the lovers, can fail to respect the independence of the offspring. For more on this, see my "Love: self-propagation, self-actualization, or ekstasis?" (unpublished). It is the threat of this sort of failure that I detect in Baier's talk of "homosexuals" wanting their children "also to be homosexual" (on which I say more in the next note) and that is my primary concern here.

<sup>17</sup> I prefer to leave aside here the question of whether gays and lesbians want their children "also to be homosexual". For the idea that this is true strikes me as doubtful insofar as the members of sexual minorities seem to me (if anything) *less* likely to want to impose conformity to sexual norms on their children than are the members of sexual majorities (especially those who regard themselves as members of "moral majorities"). Moreover, it seems to me that homosexuals no more depend on non-homosexuals for the perpetuation of *their* communities than philosophers depend on non-philosophers, musicians on non-musicians, and so on, for the perpetuation of theirs: though it is true that some philosophers, musicians and so on are the biological children of philosophers, musicians and so on, the philosophical and musical worlds would be radically impoverished were it not for the fact that non-philosophers and non-musicians often raise philosophically and musically inclined children. So the dependence of a certain sort of *community* on the fact that non-members reproduce themselves *biologically* seems to me not especially problematic. Finally, there seems to me little reason to worry that heterosexuals will continue to produce children who turn out, for whatever reason, to be homosexual. Nor does there seem to me any reason to worry that homosexuals who engaged in reproductive activity with each other would fail to produce some children who turn out "also to be homosexual". It is usually heterosexuals who worry about things like this, writing alarmist letters to newspapers, alumni magazines, and so on about what would happen if *everyone* were homosexual – to which I am often tempted to respond that there would very likely be fewer unwanted children and fewer concerns about the so-called population explosion.

<sup>18</sup> Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry: Selected Prose 1978-1985* (W.W. Norton and Company, 1986).

<sup>19</sup> This talk of moral prejudices stems from Hume, from whose essay “Of Moral Prejudices” Baier borrows the title of her second collection of papers: *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics* (Harvard University Press, 1994). As Baier explains in her Preface, she takes her essays “both to concern and to display moral prejudices”.

<sup>20</sup> For more on this issue, see my “Impersonal Friends” in *The Monist* 74 (1991) 3-29; and “Trusting ‘First’ and ‘Second’ Selves: Aristotelian Reflections on Virginia Woolf and Annette Baier”, pp. 329-364 of *Persons and Passions*, cited in note 2 above.

<sup>21</sup> Baier is quoting here from the Introduction to Charles Taylor’s *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers*, Vol. II (Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>22</sup> See also “The Naturalist View of Persons” p. 10:

Our capacity for play is, as Hume, Nietzsche and others have recognized, an important member of the skills of personhood. Hume took this capacity to be continuous with that found in all the higher animals and to show itself in our case in our truth-seeking games, as much as in backgammon and chess.

<sup>23</sup> I quote from Locke’s account in the appendix, [D1].

<sup>24</sup> For a brief sketch of my reading of Locke (which I hope to develop more fully in future work) see my “Personal Identity: The Non-Branching Form of ‘What Matters’” in *The Blackwell Guide to Metaphysics*, edited by R. Gale (Basil Blackwell, 2002) pp. 190-218.

<sup>25</sup> There is a slight complication here, insofar as Locke was agnostic about whether it was really souls that carried continuity of consciousness. But we can for present purposes ignore this.

<sup>26</sup> From Shoemaker’s contribution to S. Shoemaker and R. Swinburne: *Personal Identity* (Basil Blackwell, 1984) p. 78. Shoemaker first presented the Brownson case in *Chapter One of Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity* (Cornell University Press, 1963).

<sup>27</sup> For more on this, see Charles Marks, *Commisurotomy, Consciousness, and Unity of Mind* (Bradford Books, 1980).

<sup>28</sup> For my defense of this view, see “Friends and Future Selves,” *The Philosophical Review* 95 (1986) 547-80; and “Personal Identity: the Non-Branching Form of ‘What Matters’” cited above.

<sup>29</sup> I might note here that Baier’s talk of “becoming a potentially endless series of successive selves”, though meant to target science-fiction type scenarios of the sort envisaged by Parfit, is reminiscent of Aristotle’s explicitly naturalistic idea that reproduction (in which a father makes another little “himself”, who will in turn produce another little “*himself*”, and so on ad infinitum) is one of the *most natural* activities of an animal: it is an animal’s way way of seeking the only sort of immortality possible for it – namely, immortality “in form” even if not “in number”. See Aristotle, *De Anima* II.4.

<sup>30</sup> I take the reference to ‘gene pools’ to be a reference to first-natural facts, and talk of gender as a (perhaps unwitting) reference to second-natural facts, gender (as distinct from sex) being primarily a cultural phenomenon. Baier’s point might perhaps have been better put in terms of ‘sex’, which is more biological and to that extent more first-natural.

<sup>31</sup> Please note the elision of the Lockean and Kantian pictures here.

<sup>32</sup> I take this reference to the traditional *gendered* division of labor to be a reference to *second*-natural facts that may help to make the naturalistic view of persons come more easily – we could say “more *second*-naturally” – to women, at least in societies like ours. And I take the subsequent reference to persons being “born of women” to be a reference to a *first*-natural fact that may help to make the naturalist view of persons come more easily – perhaps even “*first*-naturally” – to women. The important point here is the apparent (and in my view unjustified) *parity* with which Baier appeals to *both* sorts of facts.

<sup>33</sup> The conception of responsibility here is surprisingly *individualist* given the sorts of views Baier generally expresses elsewhere.

<sup>34</sup> Think, for example, of Levin’s behavior and feelings (as described by Tolstoy in Part VII, Chapter XV of *Anna Karenina*) during the twenty-two hours of labor suffered by his beloved Kitty.

<sup>35</sup> I discuss the much maligned use of “thought experiments” in arguments



about personal identity, and defend some uses of them, in “Back to ‘The Self and the Future’”, which appears in a special issue of *Philosophical Topics* [1999] devoted to the work of (my philosophical forefather) Sydney Shoemaker.

<sup>36</sup> I’m tempted to say “at least in flat shoes and forwards”. For a brilliant discussion of the work of mothering and who can do it, a discussion that shares one of Baier’s noblest “moral prejudices” (namely, her prejudice against excessively intellectualist conceptions of rationality), see Sara Ruddick’s *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989).

<sup>37</sup> If Baier can countenance the possibility that someone whose personality is such that it requires for its expression a handsome athletic body should survive permanent paralysis and radical disfigurement, then she should I think be willing to countenance the possibility that someone with such a personality should be capable of adapting to new (and perhaps improved) handsome and athletic body: for this may do less damage to his personality than would paralysis and disfigurement. If Baier is not willing to countenance this, then she should perhaps revert fully to first-naturalism, and give up her own Cartesian talk about persons in favor of more Aristotelian talk simply about human animals. Note however that this is perhaps unfair to Aristotle insofar as he takes our rationality to be *part* of our animal nature and also recognizes the importance of our *second* nature. Still, the “naturalist” reading of Aristotle is one to which I think Baier herself *should* be sympathetic, and it is certainly less eccentric than her reading of Descartes.

<sup>38</sup> I say “in some sense” here so as to avoid begging questions about whether identity in the strict numerical sense is preserved throughout the relevant changes.

<sup>39</sup> John Perry, *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality* (Hackett: 1978).

<sup>40</sup> The instrumental argument is suggested by John Perry in “The Importance of Being Identical”, in A. Rorty ed., *The Identities of Persons*. I argue against Perry’s merely instrumental view in my “Friends and Future Selves”, cited in note 28 above. But I need not entirely eschew such instrumental arguments. They may even, in some cases, help to bring about the existence of the sort of attitudes that I take to be constitutive of the sort of psychological continuity involved in personal survival.

<sup>41</sup> See my “Personal Identity: The Non-Branching Form of ‘What Matters’”, cited above.

<sup>42</sup> I must thank several friends for their help with this paper: Judith Baker, Tom Berry, and Karen Jones. But I am most indebted to Emily Whiting for all that I have learned from her over many, many years. So I want to dedicate this paper to Emily and her children: Caroline, Charlotte, and Nathan *Goodman*.

### Appendix: Passages from Baier and her Targets

[a] Passages from Annette Baier: *Postures of the Mind: Essays on Minds and Morals* (University of Minnesota Press, 1985).

[A1] These essays present minds as formed by culture as well as nature; our mental repertoire made possible by both of these; our beliefs, feelings, intentions, and actions showing that inheritance, as well as contributing to its continuation and development. The inheritance includes “reason”, a product of animal intelligence plus culture-facilitated self-consciousness, and it includes other such joint mental products of equal importance. I see this view as Wittgensteinian . . . I see mental states as the states of one who learns from others as well as from nature, who trains, criticizes, approves, works with, and receives criticism from others, and occasionally does need a representation of what is not present. Mental states become the states of criticism-sensitive intelligent sensitive beings, characterized in terms that bring out the role such states play in the ongoing activity, receptivity, and responsiveness that displays us not just as intelligent animals, able to anticipate events well enough to survive, but as society-dependent yet often antisocial animals, with inherited standards of correctness that we often try to disown, and with other fairly standard ways of displaying both our self-consciousness and the limits of it. [“Varieties of Mental Postures”, pp. 5-6]

[A2] Thinking shows itself and reveals qualities of mind, as much in recognition of occasion as in working out of means to ends, or proofs of theorems, as much in observance as in observation. The customs in which we were trained provide us with reasons that complicate, enrich, sometimes override those which animal purpose provides, and they prepare the way for those self-critical conventions, appeals to which we call reason. [“Mind and Change of Mind”, pp. 60-61]

[A3] [W]hile Descartes does not see speech as essential to thought, he

does see some essential features of speech to be central features of thought. Dependency on another for standards of correctness, and the capacity for meaningful acts as distinct from passive undergoings, are essential to Cartesian thinkers whether or not they are embodied and thinking *persons*. It is not clear whether Cartesian finite thinking things could recognize one another's thought if they were not embodied, whether, that is, any test of appropriate response could then apply. However, there is no doubt that the Cartesian person, the one who acts and seeks its good in this world, does speak and engage in other activities whose norms, like those of speech, derive from a human community, not merely from a single creature's intimacy and [sic] with its divine creator. ["Cartesian Persons," pp. 79-80]

[A4] A person, perhaps, is best seen as one who was long enough dependent on other persons to acquire the essential arts of personhood. Persons are essentially *second* persons, who grow up with other persons. This way of looking at persons makes it essential to them that they have successive periods of infancy, childhood, and youth, during which they develop as persons . . . Persons make calendars, write day by day meditations, celebrate anniversaries, recognize each other's transitions from one stage to another, conduct funerals. These typical activities involve recognition of the normal development of a life, as well as of the distinctive way in which a given individual has passed through its stages. The fact that a person has a life '*history*,' and that a people collectively have a history, depends on the humbler fact that each person has a childhood in which a cultural heritage is transmitted, ready for adolescent rejection and adult discriminating selection and contribution. Persons come after and before other persons. . . . Persons are beings who have some sort of personality, and although one may think of a personality in abstraction from its formation . . . all our *understanding* of personality relates to its genesis, and for us, that is in the conditions of biological life, in which one generation nurtures its successor generation, preparing it to take its place. Persons are essentially successors, heirs to other persons who formed and cared for them, and their personality is revealed both in their relations to others and in their response to their own recognized genesis. Not only does each earlier phase causally influence each later phase, as in all enduring beings, not only is there growth, maturation and aging, as in all living things, but in persons each later phase is a response to earlier phases, caused not only by them but by some sort of partial representation of them and their historical and causal relationships. . . . The paradigm persons are natural persons, animals whose long and helpless infancy enables them to become educated and cultured and speaking animals.

Because they have the time for play, culture, convention, and artifice, they can not only form new natural persons, but invent gods and create artificial persons, corporations, and states. Persons are the creation of persons. ["Cartesian Persons", pp. 84-6]

[A5] Being conscious is not enough to make one a person. For that we need Cartesian consciousness, consciousness of ourselves and our place in the world, not merely consciousness of the relevant stimuli to what is in fact self-maintenance in that world... Through participation in discourse, through being addressed and learning to address the child moves from consciousness to self-consciousness, and full Cartesian consciousness. ["Cartesian Persons," pp. 88-9]

[B] **Annette Baier: *A Progress of Sentiments: Reflections on Hume's Treatise* (Harvard University Press, 1991) pp. 140-141.**

It is the fact that human persons are essentially incarnate, that they are flesh and blood, generated, born of women, coming into the world complete with blood ties, and acquiring other social ties as they mature, grow and with others' help acquire self-consciousness, that banishes the ghost of the Book One worry, "Who am I or what?" I am a living, more or less loved and more or less loving person among persons. The "real connexion" that Book One and the "Appendix" despaired of finding is not to be found by fragmenting a person-history into separate perceptions, out of physical or social space, but by seeing persons as other persons see them, as living (really connected) bodies, with real biological connections to other persons, in a common social space, depending on them for much of our knowledge, depending on them for the sustaining of our pleasures and for the comfort in our pain, depending on them also for what independence and autonomy we come to acquire. . . Hume believes that "we can form no wish, which has not a reference to society. . ."

[C] **Passages from Annette Baier: "A Naturalist View of Persons"** Presidential Address, Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association 1990. *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 65 (1991) 5-17; reprinted in the paperback edition of Baier's *Moral Prejudices*.

[C1] I take a naturalist view of persons . . . to emphasize the interdependency of persons. Persons are born to earlier persons, and learn the arts of personhood from other persons. These arts include the

self-consciousness that follows from mutual recognition, along with the sort of representation that makes speech possible. . . Our personhood is responsive, called into full expression by other persons who treat us as one of them. [p.5]

[C2] We naturalists see persons as intelligent, talkative, playful mammals who have become conscious of ourselves, of our mammalian nature, its possibilities and the constraints it imposes. As we become conscious of our actual origins and history, we become aware of the wide range of capacities that go into our personhood. We can then see our intelligence . . . in relation to the intelligence of other smart animals, our communicative and expressive powers in relationship to theirs, our linguistic powers in the context of our other powers of expression and representation, and so on for all our multiple arts of personhood. [pp. 13-14]

[C3] In carefully distinguishing the identity of the person both from that of “the Man” and from that of any soul substance enabling a man to do his thinking and other soulful activities, Locke writes that if “same immaterial soul” made “same man,” then we would have to allow for the possibility that the same man could be “born of different women and in distant times”. It will be not qua man, but rather qua soul or qua person, that Socrates, as in Locke’s example, might be born twice, once in Athens and once in Queensborough. Birth is his origin as a man, but not as soul or person. Qua person, he has no mother or an accidental mother, or perhaps exchangeable ones. (It is interesting how Locke takes it for granted that the meaning of “same woman” and “different woman” is clearly fixed by biological and genealogical niche, in order to do his thought experiments on what “same man” should be taken to imply. Women, it seems, are to keep their biological places, while male persons plan their biology-transcending time travels.) Locke in these thoughts about thinking persons is in effect agreeing with Descartes, who in the *Third Meditation* declared that his human parents . . . “are not in any sense authors of my being, in as far as I am a thinking thing.” A naturalist, on the other hand, takes it as obvious that a person is, as Montaigne put it, “marvelously corporeal” and that a person’s ability to think is affected by genetic inheritance from parents and is vitally dependent on the sort of care it received in childhood, for example in being introduced into a language community. So naturalists see persons as having person-progenitors and person-parents who cared for them. [7]

[C4] Do Kantian persons . . . have person-progenitors? At any rate, it seems clear that in this tradition, persons do not need mothers. As a

contemporary philosopher puts it, “What is important about us is that we are persons. One’s dignity does not depend on one’s parentage, even to the extent of being born of woman, or born at all.” And now we have got to that vital Kantian conceptual link between personhood and dignity. To be a person is not to be born of woman, nor indeed to be born at all, but to spring forth from some fertile noumenal field of Ares fully formed and upright. Some philosophers who, like Locke and Kant, distinguish our personhood from our living human presence, are willing to say quite straightforwardly that infants, who so obviously are lively and do have parents, and whose dignity is not immediately obvious, are not yet persons. “Person” is always a status term: by these philosophers it is reserved for those at least trying out a dignified gait or mien. It is not our ability to tease or play (an ability which infants display better than most adults), but our upright stature, our would-be commanding presence, our pretensions to importance, that are decreed by the founding and sustaining members of the fraternity of persons to be the qualifications for membership. Persons, especially if they are men, matter, and they decree who and what matters. “We are beings to whom things matter,” they self-importantly proclaim. Aristotle, who of course did fairly straightforwardly profess the belief that persons had accidental mothers and essential fathers, launched a still flourishing tradition of finding moral significance in our upright posture (ours, that is, after infancy and before the decrepitude of old age). We are the descendants of *homo erectus*, we are told by our wise men the anthropologists. (Could it be that men have a thing about uprightness?) A recent male writer, who stresses that “to be a person is to exist in a space defined by distinctions of worth,” . . . finds symbolic significance in our particular mode of strutting. . . . Not our clever and expressive hands, nor our capacity for laughing at strutters, let alone our variations on the eyebrow flash and the shoulder shrug, but our upright heaven-gazing stance, and our spectator-conscious respect-demanding walk. [pp. 7-8].

[C5] Naturalistically-minded philosophers such as David Hume, and philosophically inclined naturalists such as Charles Darwin, have gently reminded these dignity fetishists and aspirants to uprightness that birds too are two-footed and can strut and look aloft and before they soar aloft, and that gorillas can be imposingly self-important. . . . Yet . . . we nourish the Lockean and Kantian notion that to be a person is to altogether transcend biological nature, to enter into some supernatural realm where we are no longer essentially related to and dependent on others, unless we *choose* such relationships. In that relation we are no longer born to others, with a place in a sequence of mortal generations, but rather autonomous responsible egos, each separately possessed of the



dignity, the “unconditional incomparable worth, of one destined to stand alone before his own conscience, that “representative within us of the divine judgment seat,” as Kant puts it. [pp.7-9]

[C6] Paradoxically, it is the very will to identify oneself as a lasting remembering self that prompts these generation-forgetting and death-transcending modern whimsies, if not of doing without parents, at least of switching one’s own for Garbo’s, if not of being immortal, at least of becoming a potentially endless series of successive “selves”. It is Locke’s memory criterion . . . that is thought to license these ignorings of actual biological origins, actual pasts there to be recalled, and to encourage these fantasized transfigurations, as persons wander freely across the gene pool, from memory to memory and from gender to gender. For strictly, on Locke’s criterion, a person is one who was born only if he remembers being born, was dependent on others only if he remembers the dependency. The autonomous adolescent person, if he has succeeded in forgetting that he was a heteronomous child, can rightly disown that childhood as his. These fantasies of freedom from our own actual history, actual dependency, actual mortality, actual biological limitations and determinate possibilities, have on the whole been male fantasies, and many women philosophers have found them strange. Susan Wolf sensibly says: “my reasons for being interested in persons never had much to do with my beliefs about their metaphysical composition.” Accepting a metaphysical “reduction” of persons into a sequence of conscious experiences or doings need not, she claims, in any way alter our conception of more-central-than-metaphysical aspects of persons as we view them and as we are concerned with them. On a generous construal, we might see these male fantasies as the Y chromosome trying to disown itself. It is unlikely that women, who have traditionally been allocated the care of very dependent young and old persons, will take persons as anything except interdependent persons. It is just as unlikely that women can pretend that new persons come into being in any other way than by being born of women, after a conception for which two persons are jointly responsible, in all cases except those resulting from rape or from the seduction of the non-culpably ignorant. . . . Now of course many women philosophers do participate in the neo-Lockean metaphysical thought experiments, just as there are women Kantians and there have always been eager women adherents of patriarchal religions. Women’s reputation for docility is not entirely unearned, and often it has been our best survival strategy. [p. 12]<sup>1</sup>

[C7] . . . “person” is a status term, and it is our term. It is we who have to decide what that status is and whether to give it to a human

fetus, to other animals, to corporations. . . Sometimes one wishes we could just drop the term . . . But words are hard to kill. The only realistic strategy is to make do with the old concept, heavily burdened though it is. Like Hume, we can try to rethink, debunk, and level all its elitist implications, to see our intelligence as just one among many forms of “reason in animals,” our much vaunted dignity as just a variant of the peacock’s pride or what Jenny Teichman recently demoted to “the rooster factor”, our interesting games as just one form of animal play. [p. 13]

[D] Passages from John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, the second edition appearing in 1694.

[D1] Locke’s definition of ‘person’ [Essay II.xxvii.9]

. . . we must consider what *person* stands for; which, I think, is a thinking intelligent Being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider it self as it self, the same thinking thing in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness, which is inseparable from thinking, and as it seems to me essential to it: It being impossible for any one to perceive, without perceiving, that he does perceive. When we see, hear, taste, feel, meditate, or will any thing, we know that we do so. Thus it is always as to our present Sensations and Perceptions: And by this every one is to himself, that which he calls *self*: It not being considered in this case, whether the same *self* be continued in the same, or divers Substances [i.e., in the same material bodies or the same immaterial souls]. For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and ’tis that, that makes every one to be, what he calls *self*; and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists *personal Identity*, i.e., sameness of a rational Being. And as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past Action or Thought, so far reaches the Identity of that *Person*; it is the same *self* now it was then; and ’tis by the same *self* with this present one that now reflects on it, that that Action was done.

[D2] Locke’s original “thought experiment” [Essay II.xxvii.14-15]:

14. Let any one reflect upon himself, and conclude, [a] that he has in himself an immaterial Spirit, which is that which thinks in him, and in the constant change of his Body keeps him the same; and is that which he calls himself. <sup>2</sup>

Let him also suppose [b] it to be the same Soul, that was in *Nestor* or

*Thersites*, at the Siege of Troy, (For Souls being, as far as we know any thing of them in their Nature, indifferent to any parcel of Matter, the Supposition has no apparent absurdity in it) which it may have been, as well as it is now, the Soul of any other Man:

But [c] he, now having no consciousness of any of the Actions either of *Nestor* or *Thersites*, does, or can he, conceive himself the same *Person* with either of them? Can he be concerned in either of their Actions? Attribute them to himself, or think them his own more than the Actions of any other Man, that ever existed?

So that [d] this consciousness not reaching to any of the Actions of either of those Men, he is no more one *self* with either of them, than if the Soul or immaterial Spirit, that now informs him, had been created, and began to exist, when it began to inform his present Body, though it were never so true, that the same Spirit that informed *Nestor's* or *Thersite's* Body, were numerically the same that now informs his. For this would no more make him the same Person with *Nestor*, than if some of the Particles of Matter, that were once a part of *Nestor*, were now a part of this Man, the same immaterial Substance without the same consciousness, no more making the same Person by being united to any Body, than the same Particle of Matter without consciousness united to any Body, makes the same Person. But let him once find himself conscious of any of the Actions of *Nestor*, he then finds himself the same Person with *Nestor*.

15. And thus we may be able without any difficulty to conceive, the same Person at the Resurrection, though in a Body not exactly in make or parts the same which he had here, the same consciousness going alone with the soul that inhabits it. But yet the Soul alone in the change of Bodies, would scarce to anyone, but to him that makes the Soul the *Man*, be enough to make the same *Man*. For should the Soul of a Prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the Prince's past Life, enter and inform the Body of a Cobbler as soon as deserted by his own Soul, every one sees, he [viz. the subject that then has the Cobbler's body] would be the same *Person* with the Prince, accountable only for the Prince's Actions: But who would say it was the same *Man*? For the Body too goes to making the *Man* . . . <sup>3</sup>

[E] Parfit's neo-Lockean "thought experiments" from *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford University Press, 1984).

[E1] Parfit's "fission" case, from *Reasons and Persons*, pp. 254-5:

I would survive [1] if my brain was successfully transplanted into my

twin's body. And I could survive [2] with only half my brain, the other half having been destroyed. Given these two facts, it seems clear that I would survive [3] if half of my brain was successfully transplanted into my twin's body, and the other half was destroyed.<sup>4</sup>

What [then] if the other half was not destroyed? This is the case that Wiggins described: that in which a person, like an amoeba, divides.<sup>5</sup> To simplify the case, I assume that I am one of three identical triplets. Consider:

[4] My Division: My body is fatally injured, as are the brains of my two brothers. My brain is divided, and each half is successfully transplanted into the body of one of my brothers. Each of the resulting people believes that he is me, seems to remember living my life, has my character, and is in every other way psychologically continuous with me. And he has a body that is very like mine.

This case is likely to remain impossible. . . [But] given the aims of my discussion, this does not matter. [The main] impossibility [viz., that of dividing the lower brain in a way that does not impair functioning] is merely technical. The one feature of the case that might be held to be *deeply* impossible – the division of a person's consciousness into two separate streams – is the feature that has actually happened. It would have been important if this had been impossible, since this might have supported . . . the claim that we are indivisible Cartesian Egos. . . There seems to be no similar connection between a particular view about what we really are and the impossibility of dividing and successfully transplanting the two halves of the lower brain. This impossibility thus provides no ground for refusing to consider the imagined case . . . And considering this case may help us to decide both what we believe ourselves to be, and what we in fact are. . . . [This imagined case] provides a further argument against the view that we are separately existing entities. But the main conclusion to be drawn is that *personal identity is not what matters*.<sup>6</sup>

**[E2] Parfit's "Combined Spectrum Argument", from *Reasons and Persons*, pp. 236-7.**

At the near end of this spectrum is the normal case in which a future person would be fully continuous with me as I am now, both physically and psychologically. This person would be me in just the way that, in my actual life, it will be me who wakes up tomorrow. At the far end of this spectrum the resulting person would have no continuity with me now, either physically or psychologically. In this case, the scientists would destroy my brain and body, and then create, out of new organic matter, a perfect Replica of someone else. Let us suppose this person to be. . . Greta Garbo. We can suppose that, when Garbo was 30, a group of scientists

recorded the states of all the cells in her brain and body.

In the first case in this spectrum, at the near end, nothing would be done. In the second case, a few of the cells in my brain and body would be replaced. The new cells would *not* be exact duplicates. As a result, there would be somewhat less psychological connectedness between me and the person who wakes up. This person would not have all my memories, and his character would be in one way like mine. He would have some apparent memories of Greta Garbo's life, and have one of Garbo's characteristics. Unlike me, he would enjoy acting. His body would also be in one way less like mine, and more like Garbo's. His eyes would be more like Garbo's eyes. Further along the spectrum, a larger percentage of my cells would be replaced, again with dissimilar cells. The resulting person would be in fewer ways psychologically connected with me, and in more ways connected with Garbo, as she was at 30. And there would be similar changes in this person's body. Near the far end, most of my cells would be replaced with dissimilar cells. The person who wakes up would have only a few of the cells in my original brain and body, and between her and me there would be only a few psychological connections. She would have a few apparent memories that fit my past, and a few of my habits and desires. But in every other way she would be, both physically and psychologically, just like Garbo.

These cases provide, I believe, a strong argument for the Reductionist view. The argument again assumes that our psychological features depend on the states of our brains. . . . In the case at the far end, the scientists destroy my brain and body, and then make, out of new matter, a Replica of Greta Garbo. There would be no connection, of any kind, between me and the resulting person. It could not be clearer that the resulting person would *not* be me. [So we cannot say, as we could say in the *physical* spectrum (where my psychology is held constant but different percentages of my cells are replaced) or in the *psychological* spectrum (where my matter is held constant but different percentages of my psychological states are replaced) that the resulting person would in every case be me.] We are forced to choose between . . . [saying that] somewhere in this Spectrum, there is a sharp borderline . . . [and saying that there is no sharp borderline and that] in the central cases, it would be an empty question whether the resulting person would be me. [Since it is extremely implausible to suppose that there is a sharp borderline] this Spectrum provides, as I claimed, a strong argument for the Reductionist view [according to which personal identity consists simply in psychological continuity].

### Notes to Appendix

<sup>1</sup> Here Baier appends the note saying, “I myself meekly did the philosophy that men had initially instructed me to do, and rewarded me for doing, until I safely had tenure.”

<sup>2</sup> I have inserted the letters here to help those unfamiliar with Locke grasp the structure of the passage. [a] describes the “Cartesian” identification of a Person with his Soul. [b] and [c] then raise the question whether mere sameness of soul, in the absence of psychological connections such as those afforded by memory, would suffice for sameness of Person. And [d] presents Locke’s conclusion (with some argument for it) that mere sameness of soul would *not* suffice for sameness of Person: continuity of what Locke calls “consciousness” is also necessary (and in Locke’s view sufficient) for sameness of Person, as distinct from sameness of Man (or sameness of Human Animal), which Locke goes on to discuss in section 15.

<sup>3</sup> Locke is relying here on the definition of *Person* set out in [D1].

<sup>4</sup> I have inserted the numbers here to make the structure of the passage clear. Parfit seeks primarily to establish the possibility described in [3] by appealing to two sets of what we might call “natural” facts: [1] those associated with the sorts of loss of function of one cerebral hemisphere that sometimes occur in cases of stroke or injury, and [2] those associated with “split-brain” patients whose right and left cerebral hemispheres can (at least in certain circumstances) function independently of one another after the corpus callosum connection the two hemispheres has been severed.

<sup>5</sup> Parfit is referring to an example from p. 50 of David Wiggins’ *Identity and Spatio-Temporal Continuity* (Basil Blackwell, 1967). It is an interesting question whether Baier would consider the sort of amoeba-like fission described by Wiggins as more (or less) “naturalistic” than the sort of fission that Parfit here asks us to imagine; and also which (if either) we *should* think more (or less) “naturalistic”.

<sup>6</sup> Parfit’s argument is, very roughly, that what I care about in survival is preserved in this case, and preserved “twice over”: so, since neither of the products is strictly identical to me, he concludes that “what matters” in survival is *not* identity in the strict numerical sense, but rather psychological continuity. Notice that Parfit moves in this passage from claiming that consideration of such cases can help us to decide both (a) what we *believe* ourselves to be and



(b) what we in fact *are* to claiming that case shows something about “what matters”—i.e., that personal identity is not “what matters”. It is often objected that consideration of such cases can show us (a) what we *believe* ourselves to be, and perhaps also what we *do* care about, but *not* (b) what we in fact *are*, nor “what matters” in the sense of what we *should* care about. I have argued elsewhere that a neo-Lockean who takes certain patterns of concern (as I do) to be partly constitutive of a person’s identity over time can take claims about what we *do* care about as evidence of what we *really are*. See my “Back to ‘The Self and the Future’” in *Philosophical Topics: The Philosophy of Sydney Shoemaker* 1999.